

# Language

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are learning everything from colors and numbers, to animals and greetings, and having fun in the process. "After four days you don't think the kids are really learning, and they can say the words they've learned just like students (learning the languages) in high school," said counselor and Dallas junior Samantha Spaciano, who is working at the day camp for her senior completion project.

The camp has been a great learning experience for counselor Renee Lavin, a recent Dallas graduate who wants to teach French and history after college.

"It has given me a great sense of accomplishment," she said. "The kids aren't embarrassed (to speak the language) like when they are at a higher level."

"I didn't hear one kid say they didn't have fun."

Fike was given an official go-ahead for the camp last summer by the district administration, and since April she, her fellow teachers and the students have been working diligently to put together lesson plans, develop visual aids and props and purchase rewards for the children, all on a very limited budget.

Sixteen-year-old counselor Martin Musto said the camp participants have especially taken a liking to the games set up to aid in the learning process, and the rewards they have earned.

"The kids love anything involved in a game, and (medals purchased) are the best \$4 we've ever spent at Wal-Mart."

*"I didn't hear one kid say they didn't have fun."*

Renee Lavin  
Camp counselor

Fike said many parents have hired some of her French students to teach French to their children, and that was a big drive in putting the camp together.

Lavin and Stephanie Yeung, 17, have been tutoring for some time now, and said they have seen many positive results from tutoring the children.

Yeung will be Fike's lone French IV student in the fall, and will be completing an independent study in the language for credits towards graduation.

But to Fike and the student counselors, the most important thing is that through learning an additional language, the young children are becoming more well-rounded and learning a foreign language in a country that is becoming more and more culturally diverse.

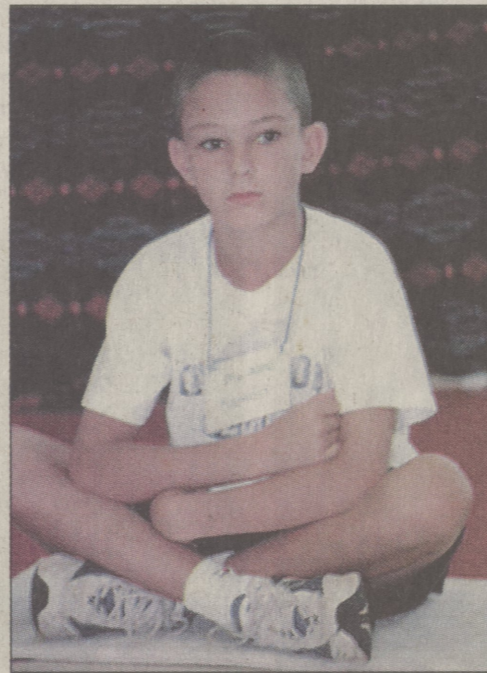
"The interest and the love to learn are all there," said Fike. "Studies show that the younger a child is, the easier it is for them to grasp a foreign language."

"This is not only a way to add more culture to their lives, but also a way to improve their understanding of another language."



Counselors put on a puppet show to help children learn French.

Some of the counselors, from left, front row: Stephanie Yeung, Janell Hetro, Amy Pack. Back row: Renee Lavin, Samantha Spaciano, Martin Musto, Jessica Duddy.



POST PHOTOS/TIMOTHY J. RAUB  
Scott Ricetti contemplated a new word.



Jessica Holdren, 9, Dallas, and Ellen Arnaud, 10, practiced saying "Hello" in Spanish.

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